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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

Soviet Army Censorship and Postal Procedures

1. After February 1954, military censorship of official mail between Soviet Army units ceased and the censorship stamp no longer appeared on the face of private correspondence. Formerly, there had been a stamp with the legend "proverenno voyennoy tsenzuroy" (checked by military censorship). Most Soviet "official" military mail needed no censorship since it was always sent by secret army postal channels and was classified. However, unclassified mail on official matters between army units was treated like any other mail. For example, if an officer wrote the former CO of a newly-arrived soldier to check discrepancies between the soldier's equipment and the corresponding entries in the soldier's service record or if a hospital officer wrote a unit to send an escort for a soldier, such correspondence might well be labeled "unclassified" but yet be considered official. [redacted] such mail was treated like any other mail and was, therefore, subject to censorship until February 1954. [redacted] such mail was not censored after that date. Although there is no more continuous censorship, [redacted] there is possibly a spot censorship or spot checking of such mail. 50X1 50X1 50X1
2. The censorship of letters on topics of mobilization and demobilization was dependent on the wording used in the letters. If a soldier wrote, "according to an order for demobilization, I shall be released on such and such a date", the letter would not pass censorship. However, if a soldier merely wrote, "I shall be home in November," the letter would pass [redacted] 50X1

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3. There had to be a return address on the envelope of any letter written to a military address [redacted]

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4. When a letter was to be sent by registered mail, a soldier was required to personally take it to a military post office and sign for it. Non-registered mail was merely posted by the soldier in the mail boxes which were available in all casernes. [redacted] there were also mail boxes in all Soviet-occupied hotels, messes, office buildings, and civilian hostels.

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5. Soviet personnel were forbidden to use the Austrian postal facilities, even to write to another Soviet military address. [redacted]

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[redacted] it would never even enter the head of a Soviet soldier to send a letter to his home in the USSR via these channels. Furthermore, anyone who did use the Austrian postal facilities would arouse a great deal of suspicion since Soviet military mail was faster and was free. Although Austrian nationals were unable to get letters into a Soviet military post either legally or officially, [redacted] any Austrian could accomplish this with the help of a Soviet soldier.

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6. No printed matter or periodicals in Russian could be sent to the USSR from Austria, but [redacted] it was possible for Soviet military personnel to send such printed matter to other military personnel within Austria or from Austria to Satellite countries. [redacted] no specific rules or regulations on this subject and [redacted] they would be known only to postal employees of a Military Post Office (Voyenno-pochtovaya stantsiya - VPS).

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7. Soviet soldiers usually kept their personal letters for a very long time, perhaps for the entire period of their military service if the contents meant something to the soldier and represented a pleasant recollection. For instance, if a girl sent a soldier many kisses and her love by mail, the soldier might keep the letter for the whole period of his military service.

Military Institute of Foreign Languages

8. Correspondence courses were given and supervised by the Military Institute of Foreign Languages (Voyenny Institut Inostrannikh Yazykov). [redacted] this institute was located in Leningrad, [redacted] it offered courses in many languages, and had a department which handled correspondence courses, presumably in several languages.

[redacted] To begin one of these courses, an officer first had to obtain the permission of his unit CO.

[redacted] EM were possibly allowed to take such courses but [redacted] of no examples.

9. The Military Institute of Foreign Languages mailed packages, by regular mail, to persons enrolled in the course. These packages contained the course's entire program which [redacted] lasted for four years;

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the packages also included text books and homework. [redacted] the work was of a nature expected in such courses and that it included reading, translations, and grammar exercises.

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